Draft Eastern District Plan

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Mr Geoff Turnbull  
Chief Commissioner, The Greater Sydney Commission

Dear Chief Commissioner,

I wish to personally congratulate you and the Greater Sydney Commission for the Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan and District Plans.

As you are aware, The University of Sydney supports the Greater Sydney Commission’s 40-year vision of a metropolis of three cities spanning from the established Sydney Harbour City in the east, through Greater Parramatta (Central River City), to the emerging city in the west (Western Parkland City), anchored by the future Western Sydney Airport. The University is particularly focussed on the vision that these three cities are to be supported by a network of innovation precincts and a 30-minute efficient transport network. We are also encouraged by the support for collaboration at the heart of this vision, and we have been working closely with our partners in the amazing Camperdown/Ultimo Health and Education precinct area to realise the potential opportunity. We are delighted that the Draft Region Plan and Central District Plan recognise this collaboration area as a super Precinct.

As highlighted within the draft Plans, universities are integral to supporting the growth and vibrancy of our major centres. Tertiary education stimulates innovative industries that foster quality, high value jobs. The University of Sydney alone has over 62,000 students, employs more than 7,000 people, and has revenues of over $2 billion a year. Collaboration with government, industry and other NSW Universities is vital for future-proofing Sydney as it continues to boost innovation and manage its increasing density in strategic ways. With its distinct presence in all three of the proposed major metropolitan areas, the University is uniquely placed to support and deliver the Greater Sydney Commission’s long-term growth objectives, should efficient transport connections be provided.

I note that for the first time, the draft Greater Sydney Region Plan has been prepared in conjunction with Transport for NSW’s Transport Strategy (the draft Future Transport 2056 Strategy). The University of Sydney applauds the Greater Sydney Commission for this integrated approach, and our submission on the draft Future Transport 2056 Strategy is included as a supporting document within this submission.
We are committed to working with you to ensure the success of the plans. To this end, we would welcome the opportunity to brief the Commission on our submission and the future plans of the University. Please do not hesitate to contact Greg Robinson, Director Campus Infrastructure Services on [reddacted] for any queries or to arrange a future meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Michael Spence

Attachments:
1. Submission to the Sydney Region Plan
2. Submission to the Central District Plan
3. Submission to the Eastern District Plan
4. Submission to the West District Plan
5. Submission to the Future Transport 2056 Strategy
Overview

With a 160-year history in the Camperdown and Darlington area of the Eastern City and as one of Australia’s leading educational institutions, the University welcomes the opportunity to respond to the revised draft of the Eastern City District Plan.

The University of Sydney is highly supportive of the revised draft Eastern City District Plan and is pleased that the Camperdown/Ultimo Health and Education precinct and the need to invigorate and support its expansion, has been acknowledged in the draft Plan and the wider Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan.

The draft Plan acknowledges that Sydney’s Health and Education Precincts will serve as significant growth industries, supporting the future growth of the NSW economy with greater reliance on knowledge-intensive jobs and tertiary education particularly in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (referred to as STEM).

While we applaud this recognition, we would also like to take this opportunity to highlight that international benchmarks indicate that efficiently connecting such innovation clusters has consistently resulted in greater agglomeration benefits as clusters and precincts begin to specialise while continuing to exchange talent and research.

The University is integral to cementing the Camperdown/Ultimo Health and Education Precinct as Sydney’s leading innovation precinct, and reaching its potential to be an innovation precinct of international standard. We believe the unique collection of industry, academia, health, start-ups and creative businesses that comprise this precinct, combined with its central location, can allow it to become a support nexus for Sydney’s other innovation precincts, accelerating their development along the maturity pathway and ultimately precinct specialisation.

It must be emphasised however, that the University, alongside other major precinct anchors such as the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA), are victims of our own success in that we are rapidly exhausting available land and our expansion to date has placed significant strain on the limited transport connections which service Camperdown and Darlington.

The University’s only immediate heavy rail station, Redfern, is already at full capacity, and will soon be non-compliant. To add to this, the station is physically constrained so that any future redevelopment is unlikely to significantly expand its capacity. Redfern’s position is some 15 minutes walk from the centre of the University’s Campus and 25 minutes walk from the RPA, which also threatens the Greater Sydney Commission’s (GSC’s) vision for a 30-minute connected city.

Recognising transport as our most immediate constraint, the University will continue to advocate that the proposed Sydney Metro West program follows an alignment which includes a station at Camperdown in lieu of White Bay as the most strategically appropriate long-term transport solution for the area.

The University of Sydney is ready to work with the GSC to implement the vision for a productive, liveable and sustainable Sydney. We acknowledge the following as the key success factors of the draft Plan:
The University fully supports the acknowledgement in the draft Plan of the need to establish a precinct wide governance framework with representation from senior leadership within Government, Universities and Industry to guide the precinct strategy, development, and implementation.

The University fully supports the draft Plan’s outline of the need to deliver an infrastructure plan which reflects the precinct’s immediate and long-term growth to ensure that key anchors within the district are connected to each of the ‘three’ cities and to ensure growth does not compromise amenity, accessibility and connectivity.

The University fully supports the draft Plan’s aim to support strategic land use planning through the release, protection and enhancement of employment land to facilitate expansion and the collaboration between research and industry, commercialisation and associated knowledge job creation and multiplier outcomes.

The University fully supports the draft Plan’s commitment to working with data analytics specialists to develop a transferable methodology for monitoring and evaluating the Camperdown – Ultimo Health and Education precinct expansion plans and their impact on productivity, liveability and sustainability outcomes.

To further strengthen the draft Eastern City District Plan, the University suggests the following for consideration:

1. The University supports the GSC’s vision for a 30 minute city and understands the need for efficient transport connections in attracting investment and talent. However, without a new heavy rail station in Camperdown, the long walk to Redfern station makes the 30 minute vision largely unattainable for the area. The University recommends that the redevelopment of Redfern Station is prioritised, and for the draft Plan to recognise that Redfern Station alone is insufficient for the future needs of the surrounding precinct.

2. The University recommends that the Sydney Metro West program prioritises a metro station in Camperdown on University grounds over one at White Bay as the most strategically appropriate and economically viable long term heavy rail solution for the Camperdown area.

3. The University would value the GSC’s recognition and support in the Plan that in order for the University to reach it’s potential in supporting the precinct’s transition to an innovation district and the associated future jobs growth, that the University will need to acquire further land in adjacent areas such as North Eveleigh.

4. The University would value recognition and support of the GSC in the Plan that the land surrounding the University, particularly between Parramatta Road and Arundel St should be broadly rezoned for higher density and a range of uses so that the University and NSW
Government can achieve as many of the education, research, commercial and innovation objectives that the draft Plan seeks to achieve.

We look forward to working with the GSC to progress the future Plan and in particular the realisation of the potential of the Collaboration Area, the Camperdown/Ultnmo Health and Education precinct.

If you have any questions about the University of Sydney submission to the Commission’s District Plan, please do not hesitate to contact Greg Robinson, Director Campus Infrastructure Services on [redacted].
University of Sydney Submission to Transport for New South Wales in response
to the Draft Future Transport 2056 Strategy and the Draft Services and
Infrastructure Plan

Overview

The University of Sydney is pleased to respond to the Draft Future Transport 2056 Strategy (the Draft Strategy), and the Draft Services and Infrastructure Plan. We are delighted that for the first time, Transport for NSW’s (TfNSW) Draft Transport Strategy has been prepared in conjunction with the Greater Sydney Commission’s (GSC’s) Draft Greater Sydney Regional Plan and Draft District Plans and applaud TfNSW for this integrated approach.

We recognise the importance of the 40-year vision, directions and outcomes framework for customer mobility in NSW set out in the Draft Strategy which will guide crucial transport investment over the long term. The Draft Strategy will be delivered through a series of supporting plans, one of which - the Draft Services Infrastructure Plan (the Draft Plan) - is of significance to the University's strategic objectives and aspirations for growth. For this reason, the University will respond to both the Draft Strategy and the Draft Plan in this submission.

Draft Future Transport 2056 Strategy

The University acknowledges and applauds the vision and principles embedded in the Draft Strategy. Importantly, the University’s own vision aligns with a number of objectives outlined in the Draft Strategy and we would greatly value the opportunity to support TfNSW in achieving them. There are two key responses to the Draft Strategy:

1. The Draft Strategy recognises that successful transport systems must be high performing and that they can help drive economic activity.

   The University’s recent submission to TfNSW and UrbanGrowth NSW (North Eveleigh Precinct: Part of Sydney’s Cluster of Clusters) outlined our vision for a North Eveleigh Precinct in response to the ‘Redfern to Eveleigh Market Sounding’. The University is a key anchor institute in the GSC’s Camperdown-Ulitzmo Collaboration Area, within which the North Eveleigh Precinct sits. The North Eveleigh Precinct vision complements the Strategy’s aim to make successful places to support the growth of communities, places and the economy.

   We are keenly aware of the physical limitations of Redfern Station to support future growth in the area. We strongly believe there is a need to fully redevelop Redfern Station to:
   • increase capacity, which would address current constraints and attract more passengers thereby relieving the traffic congestion in Sydney’s inner suburbs, and
   • ensure the Station is compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a disability and their associates most particularly in relation to access to public premises.

   We are aware however, that the physical constraints of Redfern Station will limit any redevelopment, and any improvement may simply alleviate current capacity issues – thus a significant augmentation to the area’s heavy rail network is necessary to enable the University and our Collaboration Area partners to connect to the rest of Sydney and beyond.
Based on independent studies undertaken by the University, a Sydney Metro West alignment with a station on University grounds adjacent to the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH) would provide material community and economic benefits including an economic impact of up to **$6.8 billion** through transport and agglomeration benefits that would otherwise be constrained through the existing transport options.

In addition to this, the location of Redfern Station to the centre of the University and the RPAH (14 and 26-minute walk respectively), makes the GSC’s ‘30-minute city’ vision largely unattainable. A Sydney Metro West station at the University and adjacent to the RPAH would substantially increase the number of sub 30-minute connections between Sydney’s known innovation clusters and allow the Camperdown/Ultimo precinct to support Sydney’s other innovation clusters and the GSC’s smart city vision. The University is thus advocating for a Sydney Metro West alignment which includes stations at the Westmead Health and Education Precinct and at the University’s Camperdown Campus within the Camperdown-Ultimo Health and Education Precinct.

2. **Opportunities for Western Sydney**

The University is well placed to support the GSC’s and TfNSW’s plans in providing land, development and employment opportunities for Western Sydney including sites at Badgerys Creek (adjoining the WSA) and at Westmead. The success of these precincts as catalysts for future growth also relies upon Government commitment to essential transport infrastructure.

In relation to the Draft Strategy, we would value further discussions on the following:

- The University is aligned with the objectives set out in the Draft Strategy and would be keen to participate in the development and implementation of the Draft Strategy.

- The Draft Strategy focuses on the Mass Transit Corridor: CBD – Bays Precinct – Olympic Park – Greater Parramatta – WSA, and as the University is also focussed on these areas, we would value the opportunity to engage in future discussions on the need for investment decisions around the Corridor.

- The University recognises that the physical constraints of Redfern Station means that any redevelopment of the Station may simply alleviate current capacity issues. We would value discussions on the need for a significant augmentation to the area’s heavy rail network to enable the University and our Collaboration Area partners to connect to the rest of Sydney and beyond. We are keen for a Sydney Metro West alignment which includes stations at the Westmead Health and Education Precinct and at the University’s Camperdown Campus within the Camperdown-Ultimo Health and Education Precinct.

**The Draft Services and Infrastructure Plan**

The University commends the vision and principles embedded in the Draft Plan. We would value consideration of the following:

1. The University is keen to work collaboratively with Government to provide input to possible solutions to issues identified, for example, through our current conversation with TfNSW on the Metro West Opportunity.
2. The University would be keen to be involved in any further plans concerning access to Camden and Westmead, as these are two areas that will require improvement as we continue to grow our presence in Western Sydney.

3. The University is passionate about the opportunities presented at Badgerys Creek for jobs and growth, and would be keen to work with you to build stronger connectivity between the Airport and the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA). For example, the Draft Plan shows the M12 to be an airport-only road, whereas we suggest that M12 access to both the WSEA and Airport would have far greater economic benefits for the district.

4. The University recommends that two access points to the Badgerys Creek Airport will be critical to its operational success. We suggest a northern access point for passengers and a southern one to facilitate freight, and to act as a release valve in emergencies. Attached to this submission is a report prepared by leading global advisors in commercial airport design, Market Square Consult. This report highlights the critical importance two access points play in the operational success of commercial airports.

5. It is also suggested that a planned timeframe for the M9 corridor, earlier than 2056, should be considered by TfNSW to enable and support the Government’s planned commitment for essential services and transport access to the Western Sydney Airport, the planned Aerotropolis, and the planned western employment lands.

We look forward to working with TfNSW to progress the responses to the Draft Strategy and Draft Plan outlined above. We firmly believe that transport connectivity will help us realise the potential of our precincts for the benefit of NSW.

If you have any questions about the University of Sydney’s submission to the Commission’s District Plan, please do not hesitate to contact Greg Robinson, Director Campus Infrastructure Services on [Contact Information].